

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
DALLAS DIVISION

RICARDO CASAMAYOR PUJALS,	§	
Dallas Cnty. Jail BookIn # 20007576,	§	
	§	
Petitioner,	§	
	§	
V.	§	No. 3:20-cv-1972-N-BN
	§	
THE STATE OF TEXAS, ET AL.,	§	
	§	
Respondents.	§	

**FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE**

Petitioner Ricardo Casamayor Pujals, detained pretrial at the Dallas County jail, is charged with aggravated sexual assault, *see State v. Pujals*, Nos. F20-70294 & -75326 (Crim. Dist. Ct. No. 5, Dallas Cnty., Tex.), and has been appointed Spanish-speaking defense counsel by the state court.

Pujals filed a document in this Court partially in Spanish and partially in English. *See* Dkt. No. 3. This resulting action has been referred to the undersigned United States magistrate judge for pretrial management under 28 U.S.C. § 636(b) and a standing order of reference from United States District Judge David C. Godbey.

Although the English portion of Pujals's filing characterizes this as both a habeas and a civil action, he attacks the ongoing state criminal proceedings. *See, e.g., id.* at 2 ("There was an unreasonable determination of facts leading to Plaintiff's unlawful arrest where he sustained actual injury and was never mirandized"). So his filing is properly characterized as seeking habeas relief. *Cf. Poree v. Collins*, 866 F.3d 235, 243 (5th Cir. 2017) ("[C]hallenges to the fact or duration of confinement are

properly brought under habeas.” (citing *Preiser v. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 475, 500 (1973) (“[W]hen a state prisoner is challenging the very fact or duration of his physical imprisonment, and the relief he seeks is a determination that he is entitled to immediate release or a speedier release from that imprisonment, his sole federal remedy is a writ of habeas corpus.”); citation omitted)).

Pujals is not in custody as to raise habeas claims under 28 U.S.C. § 2254, but 28 U.S.C. § 2241 “is still ‘available for challenges by a state prisoner who is not in custody pursuant to a state court judgment.’ For example, prisoners ‘in state custody for some other reason, such as pre-conviction custody, custody awaiting extradition, or other forms of custody that are possible without a conviction’ are able to take advantage of § 2241 relief,” *In re Wright*, 826 F.3d 774, 782 (4th Cir. 2016) (quoting *White v. Lambert*, 370 F.3d 1002, 1006 (9th Cir. 2004)).

And “[a] state pretrial detainee is entitled to raise constitutional claims in a federal habeas proceeding under § 2241 if two requirements are satisfied.” *Ray v. Quarterman*, No. 3:06-cv-850-L, 2006 WL 2842122, at *1 (N.D. Tex. July 24, 2006), *rec. adopted*, 2006 WL 2844129 (N.D. Tex. Sept. 29, 2006).

Pujals’s continued incarceration in Dallas County satisfies the initial “in custody” requirement. *See id.*

But he must also exhaust his “available state remedies.” *Id.* at *1 & n.1 (explaining that, “[d]espite the absence of an exhaustion requirement in the statutory language of § 2241, the courts have developed an exhaustion doctrine, holding that federal courts should abstain from the exercise of jurisdiction until the issues are

resolved in state court”; citing *Dickerson v. Louisiana*, 816 F.2d 220, 225 (5th Cir. 1987); *Braden v. 30th Judicial Circuit Ct of Ky.*, 410 U.S. 484, 489-92 (1973)); *see also Fain v. Duff*, 488 F.2d 218, 223 (5th Cir. 1973) (“With respect to collateral attack on convictions in state court, the requirement was codified in 28 U.S.C. § 2254(b), but the requirement applies to all habeas corpus actions.”).

State remedies are ordinarily not considered exhausted so long as the petitioner may effectively present his claims to the state courts by a currently available and adequate procedure. *Braden*, 410 U.S. at 489. This entails submitting the factual and legal basis of any claim to the highest available state court for review. *Carter v. Estelle*, 677 F.2d 427, 443 (5th Cir. 1982). A Texas pretrial detainee must present his claim to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. *See Deters v. Collins*, 985 F.2d 789, 795 (5th Cir. 1993); *Richardson v. Procnier*, 762 F.2d 429, 432 (5th Cir. 1985).

A petitioner may be excused from the exhaustion requirement only if he can show “exceptional circumstances of peculiar urgency.” *Deters*, 985 F.2d at 795. Absent exceptional circumstances, a pre-trial detainee may not adjudicate the merits of his claims before a judgment of conviction has been entered by a state court. *Braden*, 410 U.S. at 489.

Ray, 2006 WL 2842122, at *1; *see also Braden*, 410 U.S. at 493 (“Derailment of a pending state proceeding by an attempt to litigate constitutional defenses prematurely in federal court” is not allowed.).

Because Pujals fails to make this showing, this Court should not derail the state criminal proceedings.

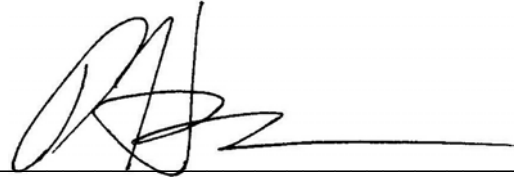
Recommendation

The Court should dismiss the pending habeas action without prejudice to Petitioner Ricardo Casamayor Pujals’s right to pursue available state court remedies.

A copy of these findings, conclusions, and recommendation shall be served on all parties in the manner provided by law. Any party who objects to any part of these

findings, conclusions, and recommendation must file specific written objections within 14 days after being served with a copy. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); FED. R. CIV. P. 72(b). In order to be specific, an objection must identify the specific finding or recommendation to which objection is made, state the basis for the objection, and specify the place in the magistrate judge's findings, conclusions, and recommendation where the disputed determination is found. An objection that merely incorporates by reference or refers to the briefing before the magistrate judge is not specific. Failure to file specific written objections will bar the aggrieved party from appealing the factual findings and legal conclusions of the magistrate judge that are accepted or adopted by the district court, except upon grounds of plain error. *See Douglass v. United Servs. Auto. Ass'n*, 79 F.3d 1415, 1417 (5th Cir. 1996).

DATED: August 18, 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Horan', is written over a horizontal line.

DAVID L. HORAN
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE